

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LIBREV 00690 110837Z

15

ACTION AF-18

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R 071050Z JUN 74 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5479
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE
USDOC WASHDC
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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ABIDJAN FOR REDSO/WA
YAOUNDE FOR RDO
COMMERCE FOR STEPHEN CONGER

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRN, EAID, GB
SUBJ: TRANSGABON RAILROAD

1. MINISTER OF STATE RAWIRI CALLED ME IN TODAY JUNE 6
TO INFORM ME THAT (1) GOG HAD DECIDED TO RETAIN SERVICES
OF SOFRERAIL/TAMS CONSORTIUM FOR SUPERVISION OF TRANSGABON
RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION WORK; (2) GOG HAD DECIDED NOT TO
USE ABOVE GROUP FOR REVIEW OF BIDS, BUT TO SET UP SPECIAL
MULTI-NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS FOR REVIEW OF BIDS
(REASON GIVEN WAS TO EFFECT ECONOMIES); AND (3)
GOG VERY INTERESTED IN OBTAINING MAXIMUM U.S.
PARTICIPATION POSSIBLE IN RAILROAD PROJECT AND THEREFORE
IN GIVING U.S. FIRMS EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN REVIEW OF
BIDS.

2. REVIEW OF BIDS WILL BEGIN JUNE 28 AND LAST THREE
MONTHS. GOG WOULD LIKE TO HAVE USG ASSIGN THREE EXPERTS
TO REVIEW BODY, WHO WOULD BE PAID FOR BY USG BUT LODGED
(IN LIBREVILLE) AT GOG EXPENSE. EXPERTS SHOULD
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PAGE 02 LIBREV 00690 110837Z

PREFERABLY BE FRENCH-SPEAKING AND KNOWLEDGEABLE IN

CONSTRUCTION WORK (LOT 3) AND SUCH OTHER LOTS (E. G. LOCOMOTIVES) IN WHICH U.S. INTERESTED. ONE OF CONCERNS OF GOG IS THAT USG STANDARDS (E. G. NON-USE OF METRIC SYSTEM) WOULD PRESENT DIFFICULTIES UNLESS U.S. EXPERTS PRESENT TO CLARIFY TECHNICAL ASPECTS. RAWIRI SAID THAT IF IT NOT POSSIBLE TO SUPPLY THREE QUALIFIED AMERICANS FOR ENTIRE THREE MONTHS, IT POSSIBLE ARRANGEMENTS COULD BE WORKED OUT PERMITTING ONE OR MORE U.S. EXPERTS TO SPEND ONLY PART OF TIME IN GABON AND POSSIBLY MAKE MORE THAN ONE TRIP. RAWIRI ALSO MENTIONED THAT U.S. GROUP COULD INCLUDE ECONOMIST VERSED IN FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF PROBLEM, SINCE QUESTION OF TIED-AID WILL OBVIOUSLY COMPLICATE REVIEW OF BIDS.

3. I REPLIED THAT I WOULD PASS ON GOG REQUEST TO WASHINGTON, BUT THAT IN VIEW SHORT NOTICE GIVEN AND VACATION PERIOD AHEAD, I COULD NOT SAY WHETHER USG COULD FULLY COMPLY WITH REQUEST.

4. COMMENT: WHILE I AM VERY CONSCIOUS OF PROBLEMS POSED BY THIS REQUEST, BELIEVE WE SHOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT POSSIBLE TO COMPLY IN VIEW OF OBVIOUS CONNECTION BETWEEN HAVING KNOWLEDGEABLE AMERICANS ON REVIEW COMMITTEE AND CHANCES OF U.S. FIRMS OBTAINING CONTRACTS. POSSIBLY USG COULD INTEREST PRIVATE U.S. COMPANIES IN PROVIDING ONE OR MORE EXPERTS (E. G. M-K, G.E.). PERHAPS ABIDJAN COULD SEND BERGIER.

5. DECLASSIFY UPON RECEIPT.
MCKESSON

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Message Attributes

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